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## Dr. *SHERLOCK's* Examination
## OF THE
## Oxford Decree:
## IN
## A Letter from a Member of that University, to his Friend in *London*.

*LONDON:*
Printed, and Sold by *M. Whitlock*, near *Stationers-Hall*, 1696.

# AN ANSWER TO Dr. SHERLOCK's Examination OF THE Principles

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versity, to his Friend in London.

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# AN ANSWER TO Dr. *SHERLOCK's* Examination, &c.

*Jan.* 3. 1695.

*Sir,*

AS to what you ask concerning Dr. *Sherlock's Modest Examination of the* Oxford *Decree* (as he calls it) I have seen it; And find, he is very Angry and under great Mistakes.

He is ſet forth in the Frontiſpiece, with his Titles at large *WILLIAM SHERLOCK*, D. D. *Dean of St.* Pauls, *Maſter of the Temple, and Chaplain in Ordinary to His Majeſty.* And thinks much that what he ſays (though without naming him) ſhould be cenſured, *conſidering his Profeſſion, Character, and Station in the Church*, P. 2.

The Title he gives it, *Decretum Oxonienſe*, or the *Oxford Decree*, is (for ought I know) a Title of his own; ſure, 'tis none of theirs who made it, who are therefore therein not concerned.

Nor was he Named in it; but only a Sermon cenſured which was Preached at *Oxford* by another Perſon. If Dr. *Sherlock* be of the ſame mind with that other Perſon, who can help it?

'Twas

'Twas *Printed* (he says) *in Latin, in these words*, &c. True; but not with that spelling; for instance, *Prefectiorum* was not Printed (once and again) with a single *e*, instead of *Præfectorum* with an *æ*.

And it was hoped so great a *Critick* as he would be thought (pag. 5.) might have been able to spell true, when he had a Printed Copy before him.

He then fancies (or would be thought to think) that some *Malicious Animadverter* (p. 15.) *had Translated this Latin into English, for the Benefit and Edification of his English Readers.* But that is one of his great mistakes. 'Twas Printed at *Oxford*, both in *Latin* and *English*, the same Day; and by the same Authority (and 'tis believed Dr. *Sherlock* knows it: was;) And the *English* (as there Printed) is as much an Origi-

nal as the *Latin*; how it is Re-printed at *London*, I know not.) But I doubt the Animadverter (if he had done it) would rather have ſaid, It was for *Benefit and Edification of Dr.* Sherlock, *for fear he ſhould not have underſtood Latin*; for it is at this rate they uſe to talk to one another.

If the Hawkers at *London*, have cauſed it to be *Re-printed*, with a *New Title* and *Notes* upon it (to make it ſell the better) and put it into the *Weekly Advertiſements* for that purpoſe, who can help it?

But the *Critick* finds fault with the *Latin*, as *tranſgreſſing the plain Rules of Grammar, in uſing Eorum fidei & curæ*, for *ſuæ*. Of that let the Criticks judge. If *their* care had been meant of *them jointly*, I think the word *ſuæ* might have been uſed; but when to be underſtood of *them Reſpectively*, I think *eorum* doth better. And I would fain know by what

what *plain Rule of* Dr. Sherlock's *Grammar* (if he have a *Grammar*) *eorum* may not be ſo uſed.

But I would not adviſe Dr. *Sherlock* to venture too much at Criticiſm. I doubt his Talent doth not lie that way; in what caſes we muſt uſe *ſuæ*, and in what *eorum*, and in what we may indifferently uſe *either*; better Criticks than Dr. *Sherlock* and I, will not take upon them to determine.

The pretended *falſe Engliſh* in that *Remark* (whoſe ever it be) *It may be noted, that the Propoſitions abovementioned are* Dr. Sherlock's *in his Diſcourſe of the Trinity, and the Defenders of it* (of that Diſcourſe) *and wrote againſt by the Animadverter*, I am yet to ſeek; I think true *Engliſh*. When Dr. *Sherlock* tells us where the bad *Engliſh* lies, let the Noter Anſwer it. Mean while, I think his two Criticiſms, to be two miſtakes.

He

He tells us, *The Decree of the Oxford Convocation is indeed* Decretum Oxonienſe, *or a Decree of the Univerſity of* Oxford, (be it ſo;) but not that of *the Heads of Colleges and Halls*. Very true; nor do they ſay it is. But, if that would do him a kindneſs, a Vote of Convocation might have been had as eaſily. For, as I do not hear that any one diſſented, in the meeting of Heads; ſo I believe there would have been as few in Convocation, if it had been propoſed there. Some perhaps would rather have had it paſſed, not there only, but *in Convocation alſo*; but, if ſo, it was to paſs there firſt, before it come to Convocation.

But he ſays, p. 6. The *Statutes refer ſuch cenſures, not to the Meeting of Heads, but to the Vice-chancellor and ſix Heads, Doctors of Divinity, and to one or both of the Profeſſors of Divinity.*

The

The word *Heads*, in this laſt Clauſe, is another of his Miſtakes, for it is not requiſite that *the ſix Doctors of Divinity* ſhould all be *Heads of Houſes*; the Vice-chancellor may as well adviſe with other Doctors.

But be it ſo; there were at leaſt *ſix Heads of Houſes, Doctors of Divinity, and one or both of the two Profeſſors of Divinity.* But is it there ſaid, He may not adviſe with *more* than *ſix*? If inſtead of calling *ſix* Heads, he call them All, is there any hurt in this? Eſpecially when they are all Unanimous?

But, he ſays, *P. 3.* they were not all preſent (very good; before we had too many, now we have too few.) But all were warned; and if ſome chanced to be out of Town, who can help it? It would have been ſo in a Convocation.

Some

*Some of the Wiſeſt Heads* (he ſays) *were abſent, and ſome preſent Diſſented.* That ſome were abſent is very like: But that any preſent did Diſſent, I have not heard, or that any then abſent did diſlike the Sentence.

But if the Meeting of *the Heads of Houſes be ſo Venerable an Authority; he will* (he ſays) *undertake, any day in the year to procure a meeting of twice as many, as Wiſe and Learned Men to cenſure their Decree,* (very *modeſtly* ſpoken!) No doubt but he and his are *Wiſe and Learned Men,* (at leaſt, he thinks ſo.) But what are thoſe *Wiſe and Learned Men* to do? *To cenſure their Decree.* Very good! Perhaps they would (ſome of them, not many,) adviſe to put *ſuæ* inſtead of *eorum.* But would they ſay (as he doth) *That the three Perſons in the Trinity, are Three diſtinct Infinite Minds and Spirits, and three Individual Subſtances?* I doubt he would not find it ſo eaſy (*every*

*day*

*day in the Year*) to procure a Meeting of *Twise so many Wise and Learned Men*, to say *This*. I do not find that his New Doctrine doth make so many Proselites.

But *supposing their Authority*, he asks, *How far their Authority extends?* I say, If it extend so far as to censure our own Members; 'tis enough for our turn at present. Dr. *Sherlock*, if he please, may keep out of their reach. And the words of the Statute be large enough, *Hæreticos, Schismaticos, & quoscunq; alios minus recte de fide Catholica, & Doctrina vel Disciplina Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ Sentientes, usque tam Conciones quam Libri, quibus male-sanæ opiniones, propagantur, cohibeantur.* And this referred (with Dr. *Sherlock*'s good leave) *Vicecancellarii judicio, assidentibus ipsi Præfectis in ordinario ipsorum Conventu*; (in the Chapter *De Authoritate & Officia Vice-cancellarii.*) And, as to Sermons in particular, (in the Chapter *De Offensionis & Dissentionis materia in Concionibus evitanda*) *siquis pro Concione aliqua, intra Universita-*

*verſitatem ejuſve præcinctum habita, quicquam Doctrinæ vel Diſciplinæ Eccleſiæ Anglicanæ publice receptæ diſſonum aut contrarium—— protulerit, ſive protuliſſe ab ipſo Vice-cancellario ſuſpectus, vel ab alio aliquo rationabilem ſuſpicionis cauſam afferente, delatus fuerit*; the Vice-chancellor or his Deputy is to proceed as is there directed, *Adhibito conſilio ſex aliorum* S. *Theol. Doctorum* (*quorum unus ſit S. Theologiæ Profeſſor Regius ſi concioni interfuerit*). But becauſe Dr. *Sherlock* (tho he pretend to cite them) doth *confeſs he doth not know our Statutes*; I ſhall admit this excuſe of *Ignorance* for his *Miſtakes*; Provided he will forbear *thus to talk of he knows not what*.

Now as to what the Vice-chancellor is thus to cenſure, it may be preſumed that he (with the Adviſe aforeſaid) is (in ſome meaſure) to make ſome judgment of it, in order to ſuch Cenſure. How far (out of the preſent caſe) they may *declare and detree Hereſy*,

*reſy*, I ſhall not take upon me to determine. A Judg, in his ordinary Proceedings, tho I think he is not to declare *New Treaſons* (beſides thoſe enumerated in the *Statute* of *Treaſons*;) yet when a caſe is to be tryed before him, I ſuppoſe he may declare, whether he think the fact in queſtion, to be *Treaſon within that Statute*. But of this, let thoſe judge, whoſe buſineſs it is to underſtand the Law.

I confeſs alſo, that I do not take *our Statutes*, to be the *Law of the Land*, (for the whole Nation;) but they be *our Rule* (by which we are to proceed as to our own members.) Ratified to us by the Arch-biſhop of *Canterbury*, under his Archiepiſcopal Seal; and by the King's Majeſty under the Great Seal of *England*.

The Statute of 1. *Eliz.* is (I ſuppoſe) to be underſtood of ſuch *Legal Conviction* (in

order to Burning) as upon which (as the Law then ſtood) the Writ *De Hæretico comburendo*, was of courſe to iſſue; which is not the preſent caſe.

That the Paper of Complaint was ſigned *but by Two*; I believe is true. *One* had been enough. And the Vice-Chancellor was ſatisfied there needed no more. And therefore did forbid the gathering of more Hands: Becauſe he meant to proceed calmly, not tumultuouſly. (And, in ſo doing, I think he did wiſely.) And it had been diſpatched ſooner; but that the buſineſs of Entertaining the King, did retard it till that Solemnity was over.

But a main buſineſs of theſe Angry Papers, is, a Quarel between Dr. *Sherlock*, and (his *Malicious Animadverter*) Dr. *South*. The Vice-chancellor and Heads of Houſes had ſaid

ſaid nothing of Dr. *Sherlock*; but had only cenſured an offenſive Sermon, which they could not approve off, but might be ſuppoſed to do, if (when Preached to their Faces) they ſhewed no diſlike of it. But Dr. *Sherlock* (whoſe Doctrine was the ſame) brings himſelf into the Quarel by a fale wind. He firſt ſuppoſeth that the Complaint was commenced by Dr. *South* (which was a miſtake, for the Sermon was complained of, the ſame day it was Preached (or that following) before Dr. *South* knew any thing of it; being at that time far enough from *Oxford*.) Then that the perſon who Preached it, was never *ſummoned* or queſtioned for it (which is a miſtake; for upon the firſt complaint the perſon was ſummoned, and did appear, and did give his Anſwer in writing, owned the words, and ſaid what he had to ſay in excuſe thereof; and this his Anſwer was communicated to the Heads of Houſes.) Next,

That

That their censure was in *Latine* only, (whereas it was Originally in *English* also.) Then, that it was *Translated* by his *Malus Animadverter* (when as there was no such matter.) That *He* caused it to be *Reprinted* at *London*; That there *He* gave it a new *Title*; That *He* made the *Remarks* in the Post-script; That, *when He had railed himself out of Breath, he called for a* Decretum Oxoniense *to help him, which was the wisest thing he could do. That Dr. South solicited the Cause with such Zeal and Importunity as could not be resisted*; That *He glories in it*; That *He Published it in one of the weekly Prints*; and much more to the same purpose. Now if you ask, How he knows all this? His proof is, *It may be supposed*, and *It is easy to guess*, p. 5. Now much of this we know to be false; And if we should add, *It may be supposed*, that the rest is so too; would not this be as good a Proof? Or, if it should be said,

That

That Dr. *Sherlock* being baffled by Dr. *South*, and having *railed* to no purpose, got a young Man to Preach his Doctrine in the face of the University *(which happened as if it had been contrived)* that in case (as was hoped) the University had taken it patiently, he might have *gloried*, that the University of *Oxford* found no fault with his Doctrine; which might *furnish him with new Topicks of Railing and Triumphing*. Would not, *It may be supposed*, do as well here? Only we cannot say, *It happened Luckily for his purpose*; but rather *Unluckily*.

But be this as it will. Let the two Doctors agree that point amongst themselves, or let the *Animadverter* and the *Defender* Fight it out. The *Decree* (as he calls it) names neither; but only Censures a third person. That this person *was not summoned*, is not true. Summoned he was, and had given in

in his Answer, in Writing, under his hand; and upon that Answer the Vice-chancellor and Heads of Houses did proceed. They did Condemn the Doctrine, and forbid the Preaching it, (by him or any other) why they were so kind as to proceed no farther against him, many reasons may be alledged. He had (while the business was depending) quitted the University, and was gone; and, 'twas hoped (being a young man) he would be more wary; and avoid the like for the future.

And if Dr. *Sherlock*, would in time have done the like, I think he had done better; and I believe the best of his Friends think so too. When he had let fall some unwary expressions, and not justifiable; he might have retracted them with as little discredit as he has done some other. And *it would be the Wisest thing he could do.*

What

What are *the thousand Jacobite Stories* he talks of (p. 1.) I know not: Whether now he *be* or *be not* a Jacobite, whether he *have* or *have not* been; or whether *sometime he have and sometime have not*; is nothing to this purpose.

If he will still insist upon it, that *If a Person be a Mind, a Spirit, a Substance, then three Persons must be Three distinct Minds, Spirits and Substances*, p. 18. (*as distinct as* Adam *and* Abel, *though not separate*, p. 20.) He knows it will not be allowed him: Because *Mind, Spirit, Substance*, are (in their proper signification) *Absolute*; but *Person* (in its proper signification) is a *Relative Term*. If Dr. *Sherlock* were Dean of *Paul's*, Dean of *Windsor*, and Dean of *Westminster*; should we thence argue, that since a *Dean* is a *Man*, an *Animal*, a *Substance*, therefore because of *three Distinct Substantial Deanaries*, they be, (or he is) *three distinct*

*distinct Men, three distinct Animals, and three distinct Substances* ? I think (not.) Because *Man, Animal, Substance*, are terms *Absolute*, but *Dean* is *Relative*.

And this hath been told him so often, that we cannot think him so dull, as not to Apprehend the Distinction, but so wilful, as that he scorns to own it; but would still have us think that *Mind, Spirit, Person*, are terms Equivalent; which will not be admitted. Or, if they be equivalent; why can he not be content himself with (what is generally received) *three Persons*, but must impose upon us his New Terms of Three Distinct *Minds*, Three distinct *Spirits*, and Three distinct *Substances*? But Scorn and Flowncing will not carry it off.

If St. *Hilary* have sometime called them *tres substantias*; he may know, that *substantia*

was at that time an ambiguous term, and taken ſometimes as the *Latine* word for *Hypoſtaſis*, and ſometimes for *Ouſia*, (for which reaſon the *Latines* were, for ſome time, ſhy of admitting the term *Hypoſtaſis*, leaſt it ſhould be thought to imply the ſame with *Subſtantia*, in the ſame ſenſe with *Ouſia*.) But when as now (for ſome Ages) it is agreed (for prevention of Ambiguity) in the one ſenſe, to call it *ſubſtance*, and in the other *ſubſiſtence*, it is not now the ſame to call them *three ſubſtances* (in contradiction to three *ſubſiſtences*) as then it was, while the word was uſed Ambiguouſly in both ſenſes.

This (I ſuppoſe) may ſatisfy you, (ſo far as concerns the Vice-chancellor and Heads of Houſes;) if it will not ſatisfy Dr. *Sherlock*, let him and the Animadverter diſpute it out.

Yours, *&c.*